Dynamic Assessment in L2 Writing Performance: The Case of Iranian EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT

Dynamic assessment (DA) is founded in the Sociocultural Theory (SCT) of Vygotsky and his conception of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). It motivated the scholars to find a way from a static approach of assessment to a dynamic process to increase individuals' independence and level of performance). This investigation probed DA intervention on the writing fluency and complexity of Iranian EFL learners. Before the treatment, the KET test was implemented for homogenizing the participants, and then 36 learners were chosen in groups, namely, experimental and control (18 participants in every group). In both groups, learners wrote a one-paragraph essay in the first session. During the intervention, which lasted for two sessions, the researcher followed some stages, including implicit and explicit feedback types in the second and third sessions to help learners move from teacher-regulation to self-regulation. Then they wrote again a one-paragraph essay as the post-test in the fourth session. Participants in the control group wrote on the same topics as the experimental group, however with no DA intervention. The researcher corrected their papers and provided some general comments in the control group. The independent-samples t-tests in the post-tests indicated that the experimental group surpassed the control group considerably concerning the writing fluency and complexity improvement. The paper concludes with a discussion and recommendations for further research into the potential DA contributions to EFL writing assessment and instruction.

KEYWORDS*: Dynamic Assessment, EFL Learners, Writing Complexity, Writing Fluency*

INTRODUCTION

Standardized way of testing, according to Bachman (1990) as the most objective procedure to evaluate different language skills of learners, has a long tradition in second and foreign language learning. However, standardized testing has been questioned since Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory (SCT) and dynamic assessment (DA) due to its underestimation of learners' abilities, (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005). DA emphasized the developmental variations between the individuals and more accurately considered learners' potentials. This was accompanied by focusing on interaction at the center of language assessment (Swain, 2001).

DA originally came into being due to complaints against traditional methods of assessment. According to Cioffi and Carney (1983), standardized assessment methods cannot estimate students' learning potential accurately, and these assessment methods will not help teachers to detect where students need assistance to improve and perform better. Actually, students' current performance level cannot determine the potential ability of learners. Brown and French (1979) state learning potential may be determined through the zone of proximal development (ZPD). According to ZPD, learners' intellectual actions can be guided and developed in DA by providing correct mediation

models. Thus, dynamic assessment proposes a way for both assessment and instruction based on the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky and specifically the notion of the ZPD (Isavi, 2012).

According to SCT, learning is social (Vygotsky, 1978). Learners' knowledge and mental growth rely on interaction with others. The collaborative conversation in the writing process mediates language learning. Lantlof (2000) asserts the talk created during the construction and revision of writing aids teachers in examining the learners' cognitive processes and exploring the effect of that talk on language learning as mirrored in learners' writing (Swain, 2001).Traditional summative testing assesses students' knowledge during a specific period of time, without providing immediate and contextualized feedback that can help the teachers and students in the process of learning (Garb, 2008); therefore, the dynamic and holistic approach of writing is not entirely used. Laura (1995, as cited in Ghahremani et al., 2013) believes that instruction and assessment must be of the same philosophy, and it is inappropriate to assess the writing process through traditional assessment methods. Moreover, assessment and evaluation should be regarded as central parts of the writing curriculum, and students must be actively involved in understanding, assessing, and evaluating the writing process. Therefore, DA can be more suitable for assessing the process of writing since the teacher is the promoter who provides immediate feedback during the whole process. Unlike the traditional ways of assessment, the primary attention of DA is on the future progress, not the past development (Ghahremani et al., 2013).

Since the introduction of DA into L2 research and education by Lantolf and Poehner (2004) and Poehner and Lantolf (2005) as a relatively new approach to L2 assessment, studies conducted in this area revealed the effectiveness of this approach in achieving higher levels of learning. However, few studies exist examining the role of mediation through dynamic assessment in the elements of writing fluency, and complexity. Therefore, the main focus on the effect of DA on detailed components of writing distinguishes this study from those of other studies which were conducted on the effect of DA on the writing process in general. It means, the present study enjoys from enough novelty to be conducted especially in the Iranian EFL context and can make great contributions by adding up the new findings to the body of the related literature. In addition to opening a new horizon to the eyes of Iranian researchers to provide statistical support in the area of dynamic assessment and writing, the present study can be considered as a voice from Iran to contribute to the body of the international literature.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The improvement of writing proficiency is integral in foreign language teaching and learning because EFL learners often have problems and difficulty conveying their ideas in writing (Isavi, 2013). Sociocultural theory depends on how L2 knowledge is internalized by experiences. SCT is "a theory of mind" (Lantolf, 2004, p. 30). SCT is rooted in the concept that "cognition originates in social interaction and is shaped by cultural and sociopolitical processes" (Watson-Gegeo, 2004, p. 332). Therefore, the SCT mainly focuses on cognition, meaning, and communication (Lantolf &Thorne, 2006).

Accordingly, the main concepts of SCT are mediated learning through social interaction, inner talk, ZPD, internalization through which the learner passes from other regulation toward self-regulation, and activity theory. Dynamic assessment (DA) is also one more notion in social constructionism, having roots in the critical theories: (a) sociocultural theory of Vygotsky and (b) structural cognitive modifiability of Feuerstein. In SCT, cognitive processes originate from social sources. As Vygotsky (1978) proposed, learners' intellectual growth depends on social, cultural, and historical comprehension. Vygotsky also suggested intellectual development is the result of social interactions with more knowledgeable adults or peers. He advocated ZPD, which is defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level specified through independent problem-solving and the level of potential development specified by problem solving with adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). ZPD, according to Vygotsky, represents the difference score, that is, the variation in the pretest (pre-intervention) and the post-test (post-intervention) scores, or the score of just the post-test (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002).

In the same vein, DA extends the interactive and social nature of learning to the assessment process through mediation theory and ZPD. According to DA, the conventional and traditional assessment of the learners' knowledge and abilities by the teacher one-sidedly is inadequate because assessment is like a two-way avenue, including the interaction between the assessor and the assessed both (Isavi, 2013, Alavi & Taghizadeh, 2014). Thus, the assessor interacts with the assessed learners to understand their current performance level and offers them different ways of improving their level of performance (Williams & Burden, 2002).

According to Feuerstein's structural cognitive modifiability, DA is a form for evaluating the learners' potential, which varies substantially from traditional testing methods (Williams & Burden, 2002). He states learners have the ability to change their intellectual potential to adjust to functional needs (Feuerstein et al., 2002). Accordingly, the teacher as a mediator, owns the authority for this kind of modifiability. Tzuriel (1992) stated that central to this theory of modifiability is Mediated Learning Experience (MLE). According to MLE, the environment does not directly influence the learners. However, they are mediated, by others, like a teacher mediator (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005). According to this concept, individuals rely on some tools instead of acting directly in the physical world, which empowers them to change the physical world. Mediation with others and changing connections through interactions is only possible through symbolic tools or signs (Ghahremani et al., 2013; Isavi, 2013). These signs, according to them, individuals construct indirect and mediated associations with themselves and the world contain the language within other things (Lantolf, 2000).

According to Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), through mediation, other significant people select and shape learners' learning experiences and help them improve their learning. According to the mediation theory, successful learning results from the interactions of people having various proficiency levels (Nazari, 2012). Verbal exchange has a dialogic nature in which a more capable interlocutor constructs a context in that the less capable interlocutor can actively enhance their learning. In this interaction, which is called scaffolding, the expert supports the learner during the learning process (Isavi, 2013). Haywood and Lidz (2007) suggested DA entitled dynamic as a consequence of assessing processes and instruction in the assessments. DA includes two main pedagogical characteristics. Firstly, it supplies learners a chance for learning (Bransford et al., 1987), and second, it integrates teaching and feedback to the process of testing (Elliott, 2003). The aim of DA is measuring, intervening, and modifying behaviors and the learning process. In addition, DA intends to develop the performance of learners through giving them instructive assistance through assessment related activities (Allal & Ducrey, 2000; Moore-Brown et al., 2006).

MODELS FOR DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT

Different models for DA have been suggested; however, the most common are interactionist DA, interventionist DA, the Cake, and the Sandwich formats. Interactionist and interventionist forms were proposed by Lantolf and Poehner (2004). Interactionist DA is concerned with Vygotsky's cooperative dialog. This approach is affected by ZPD and focuses on the learners having no prearranged ends (Poehner, 2008). The interactionist approach is called instruction in assessment (Allal & Ducrey, 2000).

The interventionist form, however, is slightly loyal to some features of the traditional approaches and utilizes the standardized procedures of assistance to put forward good results. Interventionist DA is entitled assessment in instruction (Allal & Ducrey, 2000). Sternberg and Gregorenko (2002, as cited in Isavi, 2012) differentiate the Sandwich format from the Cake format. The former is like the traditional forms of assessment in that, having taken a test, learners undergo intervention for some time and after the intervention, they get a post-test with a similar condition. Intervention in the Cake format, on the other hand, is administered by providing assistance to learners according to specific predetermined criteria in the assessment session itself (Isavi, 2012).

DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT IN WRITING

Regarding DA in writing, there is a shortage of research studies regarding content and organization strategies. Shrestha and Coffin (2012) explored the effect of instructor mediation in the text-format interaction on learners' writing in open or distance learning. They revealed DA assists in recognizing and answering to the students' needs and accounts for the undergraduate students' writing improvement. In the same vein, Xiaoxiao and Yan (2010) introduced a structure for instructing writing by focusing on the stages, namely, choosing the topic, generating ideas and structuring, and revising. Each one included the steps of pre-task, mediation, and the post-task. In their research, mediation was introduced to the students in talks between the instructor and learners or mediational tools; however, nothing was conducted concerning assessing the learners' performance. Specifically, Xiaoxiao and Yan (2010) concentrated just on the scaffolding side of DA in teaching process writing, and no assessment was conducted regarding the ZPD of learners. The findings of their investigation revealed that dialogic instruction was helpful in improving learners' learning motivation and their writing skills.

Similarly, Isavi (2013) employed the regulatory scale suggested by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) to the writing proficiency of Iranian EFL learners. After the introduction of mediation by the instructor, the learners reacted adversely to the errors they had in the pretest. The findings revealed that a DA way to students' writing can be confirmed effective. Also, Ghahremani et al. (2013) probed the impact of using the DA framework in enhancing the writing skills of the learners, concerning content and organization. It was done through implementing mediation as a means of advancing students to extend the ZPD that was created by the gap between students and the instructor or peers in writing, and they were trying to gain the purpose of improving their writing ability. The findings showed the writing proficiency of the learners improved substantially.

Similarly, Alavi and Taghizadeh (2014) investigated the effect of implicit and explicit feedback on language learners' essay writing. The results showed the students possessed various ZPDs concerning improving writing skills and acted much superior in writing from pre-test to post-test. The findings indicated that DA had an influential impact on enhancing the content, organization skills, and strategies of learners' writing, and teachers' mediation with explicit feedback was the most efficient procedure. Farrokh and Rahmani (2017) investigated the dynamic assessment in transcendence writing tasks. The experimental group went through instruction based on dynamic assessment, and the control group went through a non-dynamic writing instruction. Passing some sessions, groups received post-tests as static and dynamic assessments. The findings revealed the superiority of the experimental group in comparison to the control group. Also, the experimental group received extra transcendence tasks to probe the ability in more challenging and complicated tasks. Accordingly, a list of meditational moves was revealed subsequently.

Rashidi and Bahadori Nejad (2018) explored the effect of dynamic assessment on L2 writing ability of 17 Iranian EFL learners. The dynamic assessment procedure was conducted in three steps, topic-choice, idea-generation, and macro-revising. All the steps ran with the mediation of the teacher and the learners. Comparing the results of pre- and post-tests through paired sample t-test, the experimental group's dynamic assessment scores were better than the control group's scores. The results revealed that dynamic assessment significantly affected learners' scores and developed their writing ability. The results of the interview proved that dynamic assessment improve the learners' EFL process writing, their writing confidence and motivation.

In another study, Shabani (2018) probed a mixed-method investigation regarding group-based dynamic assessment in writing. Sixty homogenized students formed the groups of experimental and control. The experimental group was exposed to DA instruction for some sessions, and was given prompts, hints and scaffolding in different steps of writing, such as selecting the topic, generating ideas and revising. Meanwhile, the control group did not receive negotiation or interaction. Quantitative data analysis regarding the pre-test and post-test scores showed the superiority of the experimental group over the control group. The micro-genetic examination indicated, the DA instruction helped to recognize the sources of writing problems and enhance the abilities that are in the way of maturation. DA interactions also could create a state of inter-subjectivity and interdependence between the more and

less proficient learners in peripheral participation. Moreover, the study found that the DA interactions helped the whole class advance in its ZPDs when constructing ZPDs with learners in the social microcosm of the class.

Moreover, Khorami Fard and Derakhshi (2019) explored linguistic accuracy in intermediate EFL learners' writing in two dynamic assessment and non-dynamic assessment groups. The learners' errors first in their writings as the pre-test were analyzed based on grammatical, syntactic, substance, and lexical deviations. Then the DA group received an interventionist dynamic assessment, but the non-dynamic assessment group was exposed to no mediation and feedback. As a post-test, both groups' compositions during the course were analyzed. The findings indicated that the experimental group overcame their writing difficulties considerably. Afshari et al. (2020) investigated the effects of employing group dynamic assessment procedures to prove EFL writing development in an Iranian university context. The study probed learner achievement, patterns of occurrence of mediation incidents, and learners' and teachers' perceptions regarding group dynamic assessment. Quantitative data comprised learners' performance on writing tests and the frequency of occurrence of mediation incidents involving EFL writing components. Results indicated that group dynamic assessment was more effective than conventional explicit intervention for low ability learners in comparison with mid and high ability ones. In addition, the study reported the efficacy of group DA in promoting both EFL writing and learner self-regulation. Qualitative data analysis revealed that most learners and teachers had positive attitudes regarding the efficacy of group DA for supporting EFL writing development.

Etemadi and Abbasian (2023) investigated the impact of the interventionist DA modalities on the writing revision types in sample essays. The experimental group was provided with DA interventions when the control group went through non-dynamic teaching writing revision types. The findings revealed significant differences in facilitative DA modality over authoritative DA modality, Addition Deletion, and Substitution. There were not any variations between the groups in 'Permutation'. Despite extensive investigation on DA in psychology and general education, very few studies have been conducted concerning L2 writing performance generally and writing components in detail, particularly (Poehner, 2008). Therefore, the current study ended by probing the effect of DA on Iranian EFL learners' writing fluency and complexity.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Does DA have statistically significant effect on learners' writing fluency?
2. Does DA have statistically significant effect on learners' writing complexity?

METHODOLOGY

PARTICIPANTS

By the standard KET general language proficiency test, 36 intermediate university female EFL students majoring in TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Gonbad Kavoos, Iran, were selected randomly and assigned to two groups, (experimental and control groups, N= 18 in each) for data collection. The participants' ages ranged between 20 and 25 years. They were majoring in TEFL, studying paragraph-writing course at Islamic Azad University, Gonbad Kavoos Branch.

INSTRUMENTS

Key English Test (KET)
KET by Cambridge ESOL is at level A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. At this level learners can comprehend and utilize common expressions and phrases. To explore the impact of DA on the learners' writing fluency and complexity development, learners in both groups received a post-test of writing on a similar topic. The data were examined for fluency and complexity based on the procedure employed by Wigglesworth and Storch (2009). Additionally, to increase the reliability of the scores, a rating was conducted by both the researcher and another teacher. Then, the mean score of raters for every participant was computed.

WIGGLESWORTH AND STORCH'S (2009) PROCEDURE OF WRITING ANALYSIS

In this study, Wigglesworth and Storch's (2009) writing rubric was applied to measure learners' writing fluency and complexity. According to their rubric, fluency is measured by the average number of words, T-units and clauses per text and complexity is computed by the proportion of clauses to T-units, and percentage of dependent clauses of total clauses.

PROCEDURES

To homogenize the participants, a standard KET general language proficiency test with 55 questions was administered to 55 learners. Accordingly, the scores of 36 participants fell within one standard deviation above and below the mean. The participants had 60 minutes to respond to this test. Consequently, they were divided randomly into experimental and control groups. Having collected the learners' first writings in the first session, the researcher noticed that there was different spelling, lexical and grammatical errors as well as cohesion and coherence problems. According to the interventionist DA form, the researcher followed some stages in two sessions during the intervention in the experimental group. In the second session, the researcher (the teacher of the class) gave implicit feedback types in three stages. In the first stage, the researcher gave back the papers to the learners and they were required to think of any errors in their writing without asking the teacher any questions. After collecting the papers, the researcher noticed that some of the learners had corrected some of their errors.

In the second stage, learners were told to locate any mistakes in their drafts with needed hints from the instructor. Then, the teacher first underlined the sentences having mistakes, and then phrases without specifying the type or the accurate place of the errors. The participants were required to locate and revise as many errors as possible individually. However, the researcher let them consult her whenever needed. In the third stage, the researcher pointed out the type of the error without indicating the error. Then, the teacher collected all the papers in that session. In the third session, the researcher gave explicit feedback to the learners having errors in their writings, that is, the researcher indicated the exact nature of the error and asked the learners to correct them. Then, she recollected all the papers. The participants in the control group wrote about the similar topics that the participants in the experimental group did; nevertheless, the teacher did not apply DA intervention in the control group and instead the researcher herself corrected the errors and provided some comments such as good, great, ok, acceptable, and so on. In the next session, the researcher handed in the paper to the learners in the control group to observe them and then recollected them. After three sessions, the researcher asked them to write on the same topic as the experimental group did in the post-test. When the treatment finished, to examine the impact of DA intervention on the writing fluency and complexity of learners, the teacher conducted the post-test on the topic similar to the first one in the fourth session and analyzed the papers according to Wigglesworth and Storch's (2009) rubric.

DATA ANALYSIS

The software SPSS version 23 was employed for analyzing the data. Accordingly, an independent- samples t-test was implemented in order to contrast the mean scores of both groups. According to the research design, measurement in the post-test, both groups received training with or without DA intervention. More effectiveness meant getting a higher score by comparing two groups to examine if there was a significant difference. Therefore, the group with a higher average outperformed the other group, and since there were two independent groups, independent-samples t - test was used.

RESULTS

The results of the independent-samples t-test comparing the means of the control and experimental groups in the post-test appear in Tables 1 and 2. This way the research questions were examined for the effect of DA on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing fluency and complexity.

Items related to writing fluency were evaluated in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive and Inferential Review of Items Related to Writing Fluency

writing fluency	Descriptive Statistics		Inferential statistics				
	Control N=18	Experimental N=18	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for quality of means		
	Mean ±Std	Mean±Std	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.
Word Number	66.38±13.08	114.33±33.16	6.091	.019	-5.70	22.1	.000
T-unit Number	5.61±1.53	9.83±4.44	8.332	.007	-3.80	21.0	.001
Clause Number	8.11±2.34	13.55±5.52	8.434	.006	-3.84	22.95	.001

According to Table 1, in the post-test, the mean score of word number in the experimental group was 114.33±33.16, and in the control group was 66.38±13.08. Under the assumption of unequal variances of the groups, t-test results indicated that a significant difference was observed between the groups in this item, ($p<0.001$). A similar study on T-unit number showed that, the mean score of the control group was 5.61±1.53 and the experimental group was 9.83±4.44 in the post-test. Under the assumption of unequal variances of the groups, t-test results indicated a statistically significant difference between the groups, ($p<0.001$). Regarding the clause number, the mean score of the control group was 8.11±2.34 and the experimental group was 13.55±5.52 in the post-test, which under the assumption of unequal variances of the groups, t-test results revealed a noteworthy difference between the groups, ($p<0.001$).

Items related to writing complexity were evaluated in Table 2.

Table 2
Descriptive and Inferential Review of Items Related to Writing Complexity

writing complexity	Descriptive Statistics		Inferential statistics				
	Control N=18	Experimental N=18	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for quality of means		
	Mean ±Std	Mean±Std	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.
Proportion of Clauses to T-units	1.46±.316	2.58±.498	3.732	.062	-7.99	34	.000
Percentage of Dependent Clauses of Total Clauses	20.48±7.23	49.44±9.24	3.976	.05	-10.47	34	.000

Table 2 shows the mean score in the post-test for the proportion of clauses to T-units in the experimental group was 2.58±.498 and in the control group was 1.46±.316. Under the assumption of equal variances of groups, the results of the t-test indicated a considerable difference was observed between both groups in this item. (p<0.001). In accordance with Table 2, the percentage of dependent clauses of total clauses in the post-test showed that in the post-test stage, the mean score of the control group was 20.48±7.23 and the experimental group was 49.44±9.24, which under the assumption of unequal variances of the groups, t-test results indicated a statistically significant difference between both groups. (p<0.001)

DISCUSSION

This investigation probed the impact of DA intervention on Iranian EFL learners' writing fluency and complexity development. Accordingly, findings through the independent-samples t-test results indicated that DA intervention is efficient in enhancing L2 learners' writing fluency and complexity. This could be due to the positive effect of supplying students with more chances for interaction with the instructor in various ways of mediation in DA. The mediation provided learners a chance to raise consciousness in some writing features that learners were negligible in the control group. According to the sociocultural theory (SCT), the performance improvement of learners proved the social nature of intellectual development and that the development of higher mental skills is rooted in social interaction (Lantolf &Thorne, 2006). According to ZPD and the sociocultural theory which are the central concepts of DA, this investigation confirmed that the teacher interaction can help learners go above the present level of proficiency, that was the internalization of writing elements. The findings indicated that the writing ability of participants advanced in the session three and also the session four stages significantly, showing that teacher mediation helped the students go from teacher-regulation to self-regulation.

The findings support Shrestha and Coffin (2012) and Xiaoxiao and Yan (2010) who suggested that DA was influential in improving the process of writing. Moreover, the results confirm the findings of the studies conducted by Ghahremani et al. (2013), Isavi (2013), Alavi and Taghizadeh (2014) Farrokh and Rahmani (2017), Rashidi and Bahadori Nejad (2018), Shabani (2018), Afshari et al., (2020) and Etemadi and Abbasian (2023) who showed that the mediation supplied by the teacher can be efficiently moved to the new contexts, for example, the posttest. As Khorami Fard and Derakhshi (2019) provided evidence for improvement in the writing accuracy by DA intervention, this study also revealed improvement in writing fluency and complexity by applying DA. Moreover, the findings are consistent with those of Nassaji and Swain's (2000) study which indicated that both implicit and explicit feedback types were efficient in enhancing students' knowledge of linguistic features. Certain linguistic features like fluency and complexity require learners' deep processing and the learners are required to think more to properly use them in their writing. To put it in another way, learners need more assistance and direction from the teacher concerning these strategies.

Since the learners were more capable of amending their errors in the last stages, that is, explicit feedback in this study, the results are in accordance with Nassaji and Swain's (2000) suggestion stating that mediation provided through explicit feedback is much more efficient than the implicit one because implicit feedback engages the learners cognitively and as a result, they cannot locate the error precisely. Additionally, DA, in comparison to the static methods of assessment, is more communicative and enables students to get ready for the outside the classroom; that is, the real-world communication. According to Mardani and Tavakoli (2011), by adjusting the DA policy, learners do not consider testing as something boring and scaring, instead they see it as a learning opportunity.
In addition, the results provide more evidence for mixing assessment and instruction to be effective for EFL learners In L2 writing generally and writing elements specifically. The results can be justified according to DA which asserts that instruction is not separated from assessment. It supports teacher-student interaction in a dialogic way towards students' future development.

Therefore, the results have implications for the teachers by suggesting an alternative way to the teaching and assessment of writing in the foreign language simultaneously. Teachers can benefit from DA as the basis for the

assessment and instruction of writing. Moreover, teachers can utilize DA besides the traditional assessment since it offers a large opportunity to improve the writing of learners. Language teachers are recommended to utilize multiple forms of assessment to evaluate learners' progress. Specifically, the results imply that teachers be more aware of the nuances of L2 writing influenced by employing DA mediation.

Since this investigation worked on females, a study is suggested to be carried out on males, too. In addition, this study concentrated on the teachers' role as the mediator and the part of the peers may be used as a mediation in future studies. Moreover, this investigation probed the role of DA on writing fluency and complexity and other studies can explore the impact of DA on the other components of language like vocabulary and grammar. This study had a relatively small sample size of participants. This limited sample size may restrict the generalizability of the findings to a larger population of Iranian EFL students. More studies can be replicated using more populated participants in other different contexts. So, it should be mentioned that any generalizations should be done cautiously regarding the findings.

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